

To the Honorable Commissioners of the FCC,

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. I am voicing my support to retain all the FCC rules in question. These rules set limits on concentration of the broadcast industry and serve the public interest by preserving diversity of ownership in the broadcast marketplace. These rules are; The Television-Radio Cross-Ownership Rule, The Broadcast-Newspaper Cross Ownership Ban, The National Television Ownership Rule, The Duopoly Rule for Radio, The Local Television Ownership Rule, and The Dual Network Rule.

The great privilege to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events, both locally and globally, is part of the founding philosophy of this country. If the avenues for sharing information are restricted to very few, then I fear that the quality of the information presented will decay. What is the value of varied information sources when they are controlled by a single voice?

As a creator of independent media, I know first hand the importance of freedom of expression. The ability to say things that are potentially challenging to audiences at large, or possibly critical of society's sacred cows and special interests, lies at the heart of the independent media maker's business. Already it is difficult to work outside the established system. If the channels to a potential audience - be they cable programming channels, local television stations, or even newspapers that promote and review independent works - fall into the hands of even fewer corporate owners, sharing my work or the work of any independent artist will become much harder.

In such an environment, the commercial interest inevitably compromises the public interest. The FCC has rules limiting ownership to preserve the ecology of a healthy marketplace of ideas. If the FCC undermines this ecology by removing the rules, it undermines the future health of the marketplace of information.

Congress and the Supreme Court have long recognized that a functioning democracy depends on a media open to independent and unconventional news and a varied entertainment media. Media makers working outside the corporate environment continually provide content that is so defined. This unconventionality and variety that stimulates the American people both causes us to constantly question the status quo, and facilitates the ability of Americans to speak with one another. If we exist in an environment in which our news outlets have merged together, both print and broadcast, our ability to open informed discussion is restricted.

I urge you to rule in the public interest on this matter. The public interest will be served by preserving the FCC's Broadcast Media ownership rules.

Thank you,  
John Thielking  
925 38th Ave #35  
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

P.S. There should be new rules offered to improve internet access and ownership opportunities and improved access to internet sites and internet backbones. Modifications should be made to further open up cable TV and Satellite transmission and access.

All forms of information transmission should be classified as "telecommunications services" so as to provide minimal restrictions to access to information by

customers and maximum competition by service providers. Cable TV broadcasts should never be blocked for instance.

Regulation of rates that internet content providers and copyright holders charge for internet access to such items as premium sites, online newspapers archives and music broadcasts over the internet should be implemented and/or reviewed. Some opportunity should be provided for internet users to access this information (particularly on-line newspaper archives and e-books) for the same cost as they would incur reading and/or photocopying limited portions of these items in their hardcopy forms at a public library. Public libraries also allow people to check out music CDs for free. Some sort of non-recordable sampling technology should be allowed so that people can listen to songs over the internet without either paying royalties themselves or causing the service provider to pay royalties. One possibility would be to allow companies and individuals to own electronic "library copies" of books, cd's and newspapers which can be redistributed over the internet without additional charge beyond the cost of acquiring the single copy of the book, cd or newspaper. The distribution would be limited so that only one individual could access a single copy of each item at one time, just as would be the case if they checked out the hard copy version of that item from the library. If the purchaser of the CD, book, or newspaper paid a flat multiple users fee (such as \$200 for a 1 hour videotape that is legal to show to a public audience) then that individual or company should be allowed unlimited broadcast of that item from a single url. Per play fees for songs broadcast over the internet should be eliminated based on this rationale.